

PROBING STUDENT MOTIVATION FOR STUDYING INTRODUCTORY CHEMISTRY AT UWA

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ABSTRACT

The introductory chemistry unit is a unit at The University of Western Australia designed to provide an opportunity for students with little or no background in chemistry to gain an understanding of basic chemistry concepts. Due to the different backgrounds of each student it is not clear how students arrived to be enrolled in this unit, their previous chemistry experience, or what future aspirations they have for their field of study. This study aims to investigate students perceived motivations for undertaking the introductory chemistry unit and aims to assess how these motivations change with respect to different aspects common to chemistry education. This study consisted of three student surveys and two focus group interviews conducted across the course of the semester. Student responses were individually followed across the three surveys. This was to track any changes of student perceptions towards the unit and chemistry in general. The results obtained from this study will play a key role in improving the delivery of this introductory chemistry unit for future cohorts which we hope will ultimately result in improved student outcomes.

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